



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

BABBLE OF THE BOULEVARD

(Special Correspondence of THE COLLECTOR.)

A FAMOUS literary legend is in great danger of demolition. It was built up by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre round his heroine Virginia, and a good young man named Paul. All who have read the sentimental history of the two lovers will recollect that, according to Bernardin, Virginia de la Tour was drowned in the wreck of the *Saint-Geran*, having preferred to die rather than to undress herself. Recently Monsieur Arène, a distinguished author, wrote an article in which he informed admirers of the touching tale that the girl did not perish in the yawning waters, but that she was rescued by her sweetheart, whom she duly married, returning with him to her beloved Isle de France, now known as Mauritius, an English colony in the Indian ocean. It is probable, also, that the heroine of Saint-Pierre, if this authority is to be credited, became an elderly lady who wore false teeth, while her once handsome husband died of senility. Daphnis and Chloë were thus transformed into Philemon and Baucis. As a proof of his assertions M. Arène states that he saw a magnificent fan which was given to the daughter of M. de La Bourdonnais, a colonial governor, on the nuptial day of Paul and Virginia. The fan was decorated on one side with a pictorial presentment of the shipwreck of the *Saint-Geran*, and showed Paul on the beach giving his arm to the young maiden. On the other side was an inscription stating that M. de La Bourdonnais, charmed with the courageous deed of the youth, married the lovers. The fan is now in the possession of the Comtesse d'Anselme de Puisaye. So much for Monsieur Arène and his demolition of an attractive romance.

* * *

There is another side, however, to the affair, and it is set forth by M. Anatole France, who points out that the fan must be an artistic anachronism, inasmuch as the *Saint-Geran* went down in 1744, at which time M. de La Bourdonnais had left the Isle of France, having gone with a squadron to the rescue of General Duplex, governor of the French Indies, who was hard pressed by the English. As the events that suggested the story to Bernardin, and quite aside from the controversy, it may be said that the author resided in the Isle of France when the shipwreck occurred, and tradition has it that on the vessel was a certain Mademoiselle Caillon, whom a young midshipman, named Longchamps de Montandre, tried to save. Whether he was successful or not is uncertain. At all events, they inspired the not too prolific pen of Saint-Pierre with a charming legend, all the more charming, perhaps, through its very inadherence to facts and figures.

* * *

A few days ago, in looking over a collection of book plates in the library of a friend, my eye was caught with that of Felix Buhot, a modern etcher who needs no introduction to readers of THE COLLECTOR. For quaintness, originality and droll conceit, it surpasses anything I have ever seen, not even excepting the one which Stacy Marks, years ago, designed for Frederick Locker. Buhot's plate represents an Angora cat watching a Pierrot hanging limp and dead upon a gallows tree. The macaronic legend descriptive of the sad event, and which, I presume, emanates from the fecund brain of the artist, reads thus:

Adspice Pierrot pendu,
Qui hunc librum n'a pas rendu;
Si hunc librum reddidisset,
Pierrot pendu non fuisset.

Monsieur Buhot's muse is evidently a polyglot, and probably carries her brevet superior around in her pocket.

* * *

It is expected that the handsome building, constructed at the expense of the late Duchesse de Galliera, on a piece of ground presented by her to the city of Paris, will be ready for opening in January next. The history of the institution is a curious one. In 1878 the Duchesse de Galliera, by deed of gift, made over to the city authorities a suitable plot of ground for the erection of a museum. The Municipal Council, instead of at once commencing operations, postponed the matter for an indefinite period. This want of appreciation of the lady's generosity caused her to abandon her original intention to bequeath to the museum the greater portion of her magnificent gallery of art. She left her collection, worth over \$10,000,000, to the city of Genoa. Accordingly the inauguration of the museum early next year gives rise to some speculation, for it is a question whether the structure, beautiful in itself, will be but an empty shell, or whether the rich Parisian amateurs will stock it from their own private galleries.

* * *

Admitting that intellectual culture, pecuniary plenty, and abundance of spare time are essential qualifications of the typical collector, it is natural enough that those born in the purple should display a special aptitude for that particular rôle, and a French gentleman of letters, who has the advantage of writing for pleasure, not profit, has been directing our attention to that fact. Prince Luitpold, the Regent of Bavaria, owns the most complete and extensive collection of beetles

in Europe. Alexander Alexanderevich, Czar of all the Russias, is a postage-stamp and birds'-egg fiend. The Queen of Italy has an interesting collection of shoes worn at different periods of Italian history, among the most valued of which are the sandals of Nero, Cola Rienzi's "throne shoe," Mary Queen of Scots' slippers, and various foot gear having been the property of Marie Antoinette, Josephine Beauharnais and good Queen Anne of England. The King of Roumania is an indefatigable collector of autographs; the Prince of Wales is a book-buyer, while the tastes of the youthful monarch of the Iberian peninsula incline toward go-carts and rattles.

* * *

An effort is being made by the inhabitants of Choisy-le-Roi, outside of Paris, to observe, with much solemnity and ceremonial, what is vaguely called the "Centenary of the Marseillaise." The little village has the honor of possessing the dust of Rouget de l'Isle, the composer of the hymn, who was buried there in 1836, his birthplace being Sons-le-Saulnier, in the Department of the Jura. The date of the celebration has not yet been fixed.

* * *

Colley Cibber's play, "Love's Last Shift," has been translated into French under the title of "La Dernière Chemise de l'Amour."

* * *

It is strange that no modern compiler has ever thoroughly made and published a collection of the Songs of France, or done for the old Ballad minstrelsy of Gaul what Hogg and the Bannatyne Club have for Scotland, or the Percy Society and John Ritson for England, gathering together in one or more complete volumes the rondeaus and villanelles of that land of wine, war, women, and wooden shoes, a sort of Gallic fricassee, as it were, of a people whose characteristic cheerfulness and buoyancy of spirit has ever found expression for its superabundant joy in glees and madrigals. I am not ignorant that many valuable collections and compilations have already been made; but there is still a gap to be filled. There are many antiquaries of today who might advantageously apply themselves to the task of collecting the lilting triplets of the Gallic troubadours. Where, it may well be asked, can we always place our hand upon the exquisite poems of Gringoire or Clement Marôt, the lyrics of Malherbe and Ronsard, or the charming verses of Villon? The more modern poets, Lamartine, Hugo, Chenier, Chateaubriand, Delavigne, Beranger, and Millevoye, I am sure we are all passably familiar with. But as for the others and their work, the chivalric, fanciful and amatory jingles of the older bards, marked as they are with such a degree of refinement and delicacy, I fear they are known only to the few burrowing bookworms who have time or inclination to resurrect the dusty tomes from the library shelf.

* * *

In order to arrive at the garden beds of French poesy, we must transport ourselves back to the troublous eras of the XVth and XVIth centuries, when love adventures, broken hearts, broken vows and broken heads were so plentiful. Thiebault, Comte de Champagne, who swayed the destinies of the kingdom under Queen Blanche, distinguished himself not only by his patronage of the tuneful tribe, but by his own original compositions, many of which may even now be found among the manuscripts of the Bibliothèque at Paris. Richard Cœur de Lion was also an adept in the art of ballad-making. But it was reserved for the immortal René d'Anjou, called by the people le bon Roy René, to confer splendor and éclat on the craft. Aix, in Provence, was then the seat of civilization and the haunt of the Muses, and to René's fostering care the poetry of France is indebted for many of her best and simplest productions. His tuneful ditties, in his own handwriting, are also intact. Perhaps, however, the flood-tide of song broke forth only in the reign of Francis I. Then it was that Europe's minstrels, forming their lyrical effusions on the imperishable models of classical antiquity, produced strains of unparalleled sweetness and vigor, the murmurs of which have not died away to this day. The minstrelsy of France is an inexhaustible source of intellectual pleasure; full of sentimental rhapsodies, tender chords, love, romance, enthusiasm and patriotism.

* * *

Some prefer Catnach. It is a matter of taste.
PARIS, October 20, 1891.

JOHN PRESTON BEECHER.

Mr. Albert Bierstadt has been showing "The Last of the Buffaloes" and a number of other paintings at the Hanover Gallery, New Bond street, London. In the same thoroughfare Mr. Jan von Chelminsky at the Continental Gallery had a number of pictures taken in St. Petersburg, Germany and London. Mr. Chelminsky will be remembered in this city as an able and personally popular Polish-Bavarian painter of equestrian and hunting subjects, who spent a season at the Sherwood studios and painted a number of local subjects with marked success. He was the first painter to find material among our fox-hunting gentry in the Long Island region, and, so far, remains the best.